Background

As part of the VAT migration of IVR applications from the Nortel VPS-is platform to the MPS1000 platform (MPS500 in the development lab environment), PeriStudio, used to record and edit IVR voice prompts, is being upgraded to the MPS version. The recording studio is located at 1520 W. Adams.

In the current environment, prompts can be recorded either in the studio or remotely by calling into a recording application. There are some limitations to remote recording, and typically, agencies which have large quantities of prompts to record choose to come to the studio. In addition, by recording in the studio, there is easier access to the Application Engineer who provides quality review and any required prompt adjustments/refinement to produce the final recordings. Scheduling studio recordings requires coordination between the voice talent (usually separate English and Spanish-language resources), a designated agency IVR analyst, the application engineer, and studio time.

In response to agency feedback about the current prompt recording process, AZNet explored alternate solutions to enable agencies to create prompt recordings without the need to come to the recording studio.   The goal was to provide a solution that is reliable; cost effective for agencies; easy to acquire, install, and use; and compatible with the requirements for the new MPS platform as well as the requirements for the legacy VPS-is platform until the migration of all IVR applications to the new platform has been completed.

Recommended Solution

Recordings can be produced as WAV files, which can be forwarded via email or on CD to AZNet for incorporation into the respective IVR application. This solution has been determined to be the easiest, most cost-effective solution for producing voice prompts.

The recommended software is Audacity 1.2.6, a free, easy-to-use open-source recording and editing software. Release 1.2.6 is a stable release, and is available for several common operating systems, including Microsoft Windows. (A newer version, 1.3.5, is available but still in its Beta version, so is not recommended at this time.)

VAT IVR Migration Project IIC 32594

System Requirements
Windows 95 and NT are not supported.

Windows version	Recommended RAM/ processor speed	Minimum RAM/ processor speed
Windows 98, ME	128 MB / 500 MHz	64 MB / 300 MHz
Windows 2000, XP	512 MB/1 GHz	128 MB/300 MHz
Windows Vista Home Basic	2 GB / 1 GHz	512 MB / 1 GHz
Windows Vista Home Premium/ Business/Ultimate	4 GB / 2 GHz	1 GB / 1 GHz

Generally, Audacity works best on computers meeting more than the minimum requirements in the table above. Where Audacity is to be used for lengthy multi-track projects, we recommend using Windows 2000, XP or Vista running on machines of substantially higher specification than the minimum stated above.

Software Installation
Available at www.audacity.sourceforge.net/

Locate download for Version 1.2.6, and follow the prompts to download, install and launch the software.

Using the software
The user interface is simple and intuitive. The primary features to be used to produce IVR prompts are:

- Drop down menu on the upper right, to select the type of microphone being used.
- Red (circle) "record" button, to start recording
- Beige (square) "stop" button, to stop recording
- Green (triangle) "playback" button, to review the recording.
- To delete a recording after playback, select "edit, undo record" and the file will be removed.   Or click on the "x" in the upper left corner of the Audio Track box.

- Once you are satisfied with the recording, export it to a WAV file (select "file, export as WAV").
  - o If re-recording an existing prompt, name the .wav file exactly as the original prompt name. This is important to ensure that the voice file can be imported into the IVR application properly.
    - The file names are case sensitive.
    - Spanish language prompts are prepended with "SPA" in the file name. (Example: faa00101 is the English prompt; SPA-faa00101 is the Spanish translation)
    - If you are unsure of the correct file name, please check with the AZNet Application Engineer or IVR Developer.
  - o If recording a new prompt, the prompt name/number will be provided to you by the IVR application developer.
  - o Insert the .wav file(s) into a zip file labeled with the agency name, application name and date of recording. (Ex., FAA_Inbound_010609 voice files).
- After exporting the recording, delete the Audio Track. (If you have multiple Audio Tracks open, they will be combined into a single track when exported to WAV.)

Delivering the voice files
A Remedy ticket is required to engage resources (Application Engineer, IVR Developer) who will support the implementation of the new/re-recorded voice prompts into the IVR application. Opening the ticket will prompt these resources to provide you with a prompt number if required for a new prompt. You will also be advised where the completed voice files are to be delivered.

Once the .wav files are complete and inserted into a zip file, email the zip file to the specified person. In the subject line of the email, reference the Remedy Ticket number, the agency name and the production date of the included files (ex., R12345_FAA_010609 voice prompts).

Note: If the voice files are being produced for the VAT project, the subject line should reflect VAT instead of the Remedy ticket number (ex., VAT_FAA_010609 voice prompts).

You will receive a return email, indicating when the voice files will be ready to be validated within the IVR application.

Documenting the new/re-recorded voice files

Each agency/division is responsible for maintaining the records of its prompt verbiage (including English and Spanish translations where applicable). After the agency documentation (prompt list) has been updated, please forward a copy to the contact where the voice files were sent.